

News

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AVERAGE ANNUAL PAY IN ALASKA, 1998

Annual pay in Alaska averaged \$33,839 in 1998, an increase of 2.1 percent over the year, according to Regional Commissioner Stanley Stephenson of the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Alaska's pay level exceeded the national average¹ (\$31,908), but its pay growth rate continued to be the smallest of any state in the nation remaining well below the nationwide rise of 5.1 percent. Alaska has reported the lowest wage increase every year since 1995.

In addition to Alaska, California (\$35,349) and Washington (\$33,076) were the other states within the Pacific region² to exceed the U.S. average in 1998. (See table 1.) In the remaining five states in the region, average annual pay ranged from \$24,866 in Idaho to \$30,201 in Nevada. Over-the-year, Washington led the region and the nation in pay growth with a gain of 7.5 percent. Pay levels in Arizona, California and Nevada rose, 6.0, 5.4, and 5.3 percent, respectively, also surpassing the national gain. After Alaska, Hawaii's 2.4 percent increase in pay was the smallest in the region.

Annual pay data are compiled from reports submitted by employers subject to state and federal Unemployment Insurance (UI) laws, covering 124.2 million full- and part-time workers. Average annual pay is computed by dividing total annual payrolls of employees covered by UI programs by the average monthly number of these employees. (See Technical Note.) Pay differences among states reflect the varying composition of employment by occupation, industry, and hours of work, as well as other factors. Similarly, over-the-year pay changes may reflect shifts in these characteristics, as well as changes in the level of average pay.

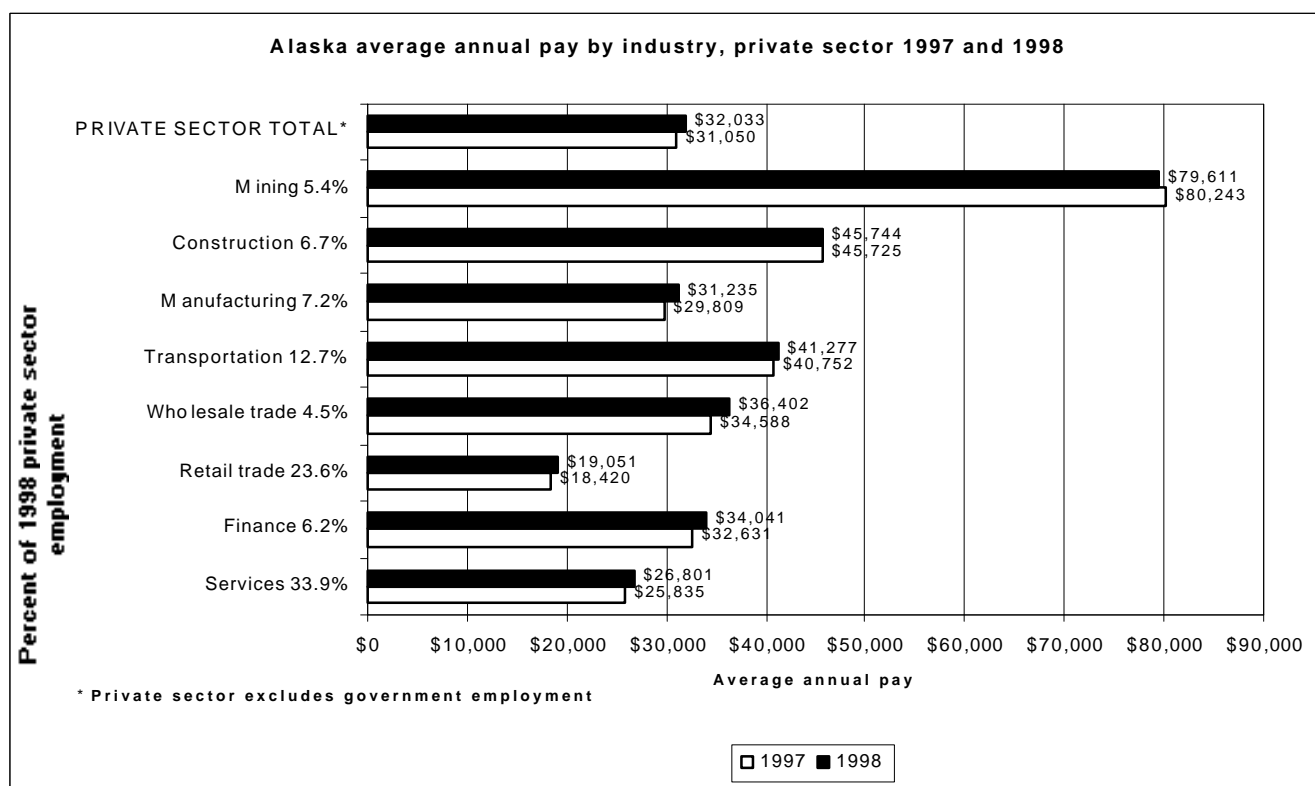
Anchorage remains Alaska's sole metropolitan area and consists of Anchorage County. Average annual pay in Anchorage rose 1.9 percent over the year to \$35,441 in 1998. (See tables 2 and 3.) Among the nation's 315 metropolitan areas³, Anchorage's pay level ranked 23rd highest overall, but its percentage gain in pay was one of the lowest nationwide. The national growth rate for all metropolitan areas was 5.2 percent.

¹ New Jersey data were not available for the third and fourth quarters of 1998. Totals for the United States were calculated using estimated data for New Jersey.

² The Pacific region consists of eight states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington.

³ The nation's 315 metropolitan areas.

Among the nine industry divisions in Alaska, mining continued to be the highest paid at \$79,611, well above the average pay for the industry nationally (\$52,021). Construction, and transportation and public utilities ranked a distant second and third in the State, averaging \$45,744 and \$41,277, respectively, though both of these industries had pay levels above the national average for that industry as well. Pay levels for several other industries in the State, however, including manufacturing and services, fell below the nationwide industry average. Retail trade, with its high concentration of part-time workers, remained the lowest-paid industry at \$19,051. (See table 4.) Overall, pay growth in eight of the nine industry divisions in Alaska was slower than the nationwide average for that industry. In fact, pay levels in three industries—construction, government and mining—edged down or remained the same over the year. Manufacturing was the only industry in the State to register a percentage increase in pay (4.8 percent) above its U.S. industry average.



TECHNICAL NOTE

These data are the product of a federal-state cooperative program in which State Employment Security Agencies (SESAs) prepare summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by Unemployment Insurance legislation. The summaries are a by-product of the administration of state unemployment insurance (UI) programs that require most employers to pay quarterly taxes based on the employment and wages of workers covered by UI. Data for 1998 are preliminary and subject to revision.

Coverage:

Employment and wage data for workers covered by state UI laws and for federal civilian workers covered by the Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) program are compiled from quarterly contribution reports submitted to the SESAs by employers. In addition to the quarterly contribution reports, employers who operate multiple establishments within a state complete a questionnaire, called the "Multiple Worksite Report," which provides detailed information on the location and industry of each of their establishments. Average annual pay data are derived from summaries of employment and wages submitted by states to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

UI and UCFE coverage is broad and basically comparable from state to state. In 1998, UI and UCFE programs covered workers in 124.2 million jobs. The estimated 119 million workers in these jobs (after adjustment for multiple jobholders) represent 98.4 percent of wage and salary civilian employment. Covered workers received \$3.961 trillion in pay, representing 95.5 percent of the wage and salary component of personal income and 46.5 percent of the gross domestic product.

Major exclusions from UI coverage during 1998 included most agricultural workers on small farms, all members of the Armed Forces, elected officials in most states, most employees of railroads, some domestic workers, most student workers at schools, and employees of certain small nonprofit organizations.

Concepts and methodology:

Average annual pay is computed by dividing total annual pay of employees covered by UI programs by the average monthly number of these employees. Included in the annual payroll data are bonuses, the cash value of meals and lodging when supplied, tips and other gratuities, and, in some states, employer contributions to certain deferred compensation plans such as 401(k) plans and stock options. Monthly employment is based on the number of workers who worked during or received pay for the pay period including the 12th of the month. With few exceptions, all employees of covered firms are reported, including production and sales workers, corporation officials, executives, supervisory personnel, and clerical workers. Workers on paid vacations and part-time workers also are included. Percentage changes in average annual pay for 1998 were computed using final 1997 data as a base.

The ratio of full-time to part-time workers as well as the number of individuals in high-paying and low-paying occupations affect average annual pay. When comparing average annual pay levels between industries and/or states, these factors should be taken into consideration. Annual pay data only approximate annual earnings, because an individual may not be employed by the same employer all year or may work for more than one employer. Year-to-year changes in average annual pay can result from a change in the proportion of employment in high- and low- wage jobs, as well as from changes in the level of average annual pay.

Data in table 2 are presented separately for the private sector and for government. Average annual pay for employment in the private sector is presented by industry division as defined in the 1987 Standard Industrial Classification Manual. Government data include federal, state, local, and international establishments.

A few covered employers provided insufficient information on the nature of their businesses to assign a specific SIC classification and therefore could not be classified by industry division. The wages for these nonclassifiable establishments, along with data for the agricultural division, are not shown separately, but are included in the averages for state and national totals.

County definitions are assigned according to Federal Information Processing Standards Publications (FIPS PUBS) as issued by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, after approval by the Secretary of Commerce pursuant to Section 5131 of the Information Technology Management Reform Act of 1997 and the Computer Security Act of 1987, Public Law 104-106. Data shown as counties include areas designated as independent cities in some jurisdictions, and, in Alaska, those designated as census areas where counties have not been created.

BLS issues three other regular reports which provide data from state UI and UCFE programs. In mid December 1999 BLS released Annual Average Pay by State and Area, 1998. Later in the month, a news release on Average Annual Pay Levels in Metropolitan Areas, 1998 was distributed. In early January 2000, a press release covering Employment and Annual Average Pay for Large Counties, 1998 was released. Also published from this program is the comprehensive bulletin, Employment and Wages Annual Averages, 1998, which features information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The report is available for sale from the BLS Publications Sales Center, P.O. Box 2145, Chicago, Illinois, 60690.

This news release, along with other BLS statistics and information, is available via the Internet at the BLS World Wide Web site (<http://stats.bls.gov>). Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Average annual pay in the Pacific Region¹ states for 1997 and 1998 and percent change in pay for all covered workers²

State	Average annual pay		Percent change 1997-98 ⁴
	1997	1998 ³	
UNITED STATES ⁵	\$30,353	\$31,908	5.1
Pacific Region.....	31,764	33,504	5.5
Alaska.....	33,156	33,839	2.1
Arizona.....	27,659	29,317	6.0
California.....	33,525	35,349	5.4
Hawaii.....	28,357	29,029	2.4
Idaho.....	24,062	24,866	3.3
Nevada.....	28,672	30,201	5.3
Oregon.....	28,411	29,542	4.0
Washington.....	30,769	33,076	7.5

¹ The Pacific Region is comprised of eight states -- Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington.

² Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

³ Data are preliminary.

⁴ Percent changes were computed from unrounded average annual pay data and may differ from those computed using data rounded to the nearest dollar.

⁵ Totals for the United States were calculated using estimated data for New Jersey for the third and fourth quarters in 1998 and do not include data for Puerto Rico.

Table 2. Average annual pay for 1997 and 1998 for all covered workers¹ by metropolitan area

Metropolitan area ²	Average annual pay			Ranking of areas
	1997	1998 ³	Percent change, 1997-98 ⁴	By level of average annual pay for 1998
All metropolitan areas ⁵	\$31,734	\$33,381	5.2	---
Metropolitan areas in Alaska				
Anchorage, AK.....	34,787	35,441	1.9	23

1 Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

2 Includes data for 315 Metropolitan Statistical Areas and Primary Metropolitan Statistical Areas in the United States as of June 1998.

3 Data are preliminary.

4 Percent changes were computed from unrounded average annual pay data and may differ from those computed using data rounded to the nearest dollar.

5 Totals were calculated using estimated data for New Jersey for the third and fourth quarters in 1998 and do not include the six MSAs within Puerto Rico.

Table 3. Employment and average annual pay for 1998 and 1997-98 percent changes for all covered workers¹ in the largest county in Alaska.

County ²	Employment			Average annual pay	
	1998 ³	Percent Change, 1997-98 ⁴	Ranked by percent change, 1997-98 ⁵	1998 ³	Percent change, 1997-98 ⁴
United States ⁶	124,150,724	2.6	-	\$31,908	5.1
Alaska					
Anchorage, AK.....	125,585	3.0	81	35,441	1.9

1 Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. The 301 U.S. counties including New Jersey counties, comprise 70.0% of the total covered workers in the U.S.

2 Includes areas not officially designated as counties. See technical note.

3 Data are preliminary. See technical note.

4 Percent changes were computed from annual employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

5 Rankings for percent change in employment are based on the 285 counties that are comparable over the year.

6 Totals for the United States were calculated using estimated data for New Jersey for the third and fourth quarters in 1998 and do not include data for Puerto Rico.

Table 4. State and industry average annual pay in the Pacific Region¹ for 1997 and 1998 and percent change in pay for all covered workers²

State and industry	Average annual pay		Percent change, 1997-98 ⁴
	1997	1998 ³	
United States ⁵			
Private ⁶			
Total.....	\$30,064	\$31,722	5.5
Mining.....	49,998	52,021	4.0
Construction.....	31,744	33,346	5.0
Manufacturing.....	38,306	40,040	4.5
Transportation, communications, and public utilities.....	37,658	39,301	4.4
Wholesale trade.....	39,449	41,759	5.9
Retail trade.....	15,878	16,794	5.8
Finance, insurance, and real estate.....	44,884	48,597	8.3
Services.....	28,466	30,011	5.4
Government.....	31,916	32,931	3.2
Alaska			
Private ⁶			
Total.....	31,050	32,033	3.2
Mining.....	80,243	79,611	-0.8
Construction.....	45,725	45,744	0.0
Manufacturing.....	29,809	31,235	4.8
Transportation, communications, and public utilities.....	40,752	41,277	1.3
Wholesale trade.....	34,588	36,402	5.2
Retail trade.....	18,420	19,051	3.4
Finance, insurance, and real estate.....	32,631	34,041	4.3
Services.....	25,835	26,801	3.7
Government.....	39,180	39,114	-0.2
Arizona			
Private ⁶			
Total.....	27,150	28,850	6.3
Mining.....	45,720	45,850	0.3
Construction.....	27,884	29,380	5.4
Manufacturing.....	39,888	42,771	7.2
Transportation, communications, and public utilities.....	34,136	35,782	4.8
Wholesale trade.....	36,672	39,892	8.8
Retail trade.....	16,729	17,638	5.4
Finance, insurance, and real estate.....	34,075	37,446	9.9
Services.....	25,307	26,711	5.5
Government.....	30,631	32,098	4.8

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 4. State and industry average annual pay in the Pacific Region¹ for 1997 and 1998 and percent change in pay for all covered workers² (Continued)

State and industry	Average annual pay		Percent change, 1997-98 ⁴
	1997	1998 ⁵	
California			
Private ⁶			
Total.....	33,010	34,841	5.5
Mining.....	58,362	61,089	4.7
Construction.....	34,514	36,081	4.5
Manufacturing.....	42,512	44,720	5.2
Transportation, communications, and public utilities.....	40,227	41,391	2.9
Wholesale trade.....	40,886	43,532	6.5
Retail trade.....	18,073	19,326	6.9
Finance, insurance, and real estate.....	47,028	51,895	10.3
Services.....	33,384	34,668	3.8
Government.....	36,341	38,228	5.2
Hawaii			
Private ⁶			
Total.....	26,979	27,662	2.5
Mining.....	50,176	51,198	2.0
Construction.....	42,312	43,554	2.9
Manufacturing.....	30,619	31,440	2.7
Transportation, communications, and public utilities.....	35,897	36,709	2.3
Wholesale trade.....	32,571	33,335	2.3
Retail trade.....	17,091	17,328	1.4
Finance, insurance, and real estate.....	34,459	36,145	4.9
Services.....	26,991	27,679	2.5
Government.....	33,848	34,428	1.7
Idaho			
Private ⁶			
Total.....	23,747	24,555	3.4
Mining.....	N/A ⁷	N/A ⁷	N/A ⁷
Construction.....	26,581	27,177	2.2
Manufacturing.....	33,421	34,219	2.4
Transportation, communications, and public utilities.....	28,989	30,089	3.8
Wholesale trade.....	26,939	28,269	4.9
Retail trade.....	14,258	14,964	5.0
Finance, insurance, and real estate.....	28,750	30,717	6.8
Services.....	22,946	23,625	3.0
Government.....	25,475	26,271	3.1

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 4. State and industry average annual pay in the Pacific Region¹ for 1997 and 1998 and percent change in pay for all covered workers² (Continued)

State and industry	Average annual pay		Percent change, 1997-98 ⁴
	1997	1998 ³	
Nevada			
Private ⁶			
Total.....	27,854	29,376	5.5
Mining.....	49,912	52,823	5.8
Construction.....	35,487	37,183	4.8
Manufacturing.....	33,064	34,978	5.8
Transportation, communications, and public utilities.....	32,507	33,477	3.0
Wholesale trade.....	36,393	38,378	5.5
Retail trade.....	18,191	19,089	4.9
Finance, insurance, and real estate.....	34,027	37,081	9.0
Services.....	26,664	28,221	5.8
Government.....	34,823	36,328	4.3
Oregon			
Private ⁶			
Total.....	27,866	29,046	4.2
Mining.....	34,782	36,171	4.0
Construction.....	34,806	35,274	1.3
Manufacturing.....	37,079	38,750	4.5
Transportation, communications, and public utilities.....	34,752	35,714	2.8
Wholesale trade.....	38,835	39,855	2.6
Retail trade.....	16,516	17,459	5.7
Finance, insurance, and real estate.....	34,882	36,963	6.0
Services.....	24,699	25,911	4.9
Government.....	31,524	32,363	2.7

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 4. State and industry average annual pay in the Pacific Region¹ for 1997 and 1998 and percent change in pay for all covered workers² (Continued)

State and industry	Average annual pay		Percent change, 1997-98 ⁴
	1997	1998 ⁵	
Washington			
Private ⁶			
Total.....	30,337	32,914	8.5
Mining.....	44,219	42,952	-2.9
Construction.....	32,601	33,670	3.3
Manufacturing.....	40,722	42,268	3.8
Transportation, communications, and public utilities.....	38,601	40,315	4.4
Wholesale trade.....	36,682	39,033	6.4
Retail trade.....	16,808	17,913	6.6
Finance, insurance, and real estate.....	37,418	40,721	8.8
Services.....	30,999	35,913	15.9
Government.....	32,830	33,865	3.2

¹ The Pacific Region is comprised of eight states -- Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington.

² Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

³ Data are preliminary.

⁴ Percent changes were computed from unrounded average annual pay data and may differ from those computed using data rounded to the nearest dollar.

⁵ Totals for the United States were calculated using estimated data for New Jersey for the third and fourth quarters in 1998 and do not include data for Puerto Rico.

⁶ Includes data for industries in addition to those shown separately.

⁷ Data do not meet BLS or State agency disclosure standards.